

Message Text

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FM AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 1208

C O N F I D E N T I A L ADDIS ABABA 10771

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FOR AF - DEPUTY ASST SECRETARY SEELYE AND AF/E - BARRETT

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PFOR, ET, US
SUBJ: WITHDRAWAL OF PEACE CORPS FROM ETHIOPIA

REF: A. STATE 246017, B. ADDIS ABABA 10770

1. YOU WILL HAVE SEEN REFTEL (A) WHICH INFORMS ME OF PC DECISION TO WITHDRAW FROM ETHIOPIA EXCEPT FOR SMALL PART-TIME OFFICE MANNED BY A SINGLE FSL. I DISAGREE ENTIRELY WITH DECISION SINCE PC DIRECTOR AND I CONTINUE TO BELIEVE WE CAN PROGRAM PCV'S MEANINGFULLY (WHICH WILL COME AS NO SURPRISE TO PC IN LIGHT OF EXTENSIVE EARLIER CORRESPONDENCE BETWEEN EMBASSY AND PC ON FUTURE OF PROGRAM HERE), BUT MESSAGE HAS RING OF IRREVOCABLE DECISION. I NONETHELESS WONDER WHETHER THERE MIGHT BE CHANCE THAT DECISION COULD BE REVERSED. PREMISES OF WHICH PC SEEMS TO HAVE MADE DECISION (SECURITY, POLITICAL SITUATION AND JOB SATISFACTION) DO NOT IN MY JUDGMENT, HOLD WATER. WE HAVE CONSISTENTLY ASSURED P THAT WE WILL ALWAYS HAVE PCV'S WELFARE UPPERMOST IN OUR MINDS IN LIGHT OF SECURITY SITUATION AS WE KNOW IT, BUT THAT ALL OF ETHIOPIA IS NOT A DANGER ZONE.

2. IF IN YOUR JUDGMENT, HOWEVER, THERE IS NO CHANCE OF REVERSAL, THEN I WOULD APPRECIATE YOUR SUPPORT IN PERSUADING PC TO DEFER IMPLEMENTATION UNTIL SUCH TIME AS I CAN RECEIVE INSTRUCTIONS FROM WASHINGTON ABOUT
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WHAT TO SAY TO ETHIOPIANS SINCE I BELIEVE IT WOULD BE

COMPLETELY WRONG FOR ETHIOPIANS TO FIND OUT SOME OTHER WAY THAN FROM US DIRECTLY.

3. IN FRAMING INSTRUCTIONS, IF IT COMES TO THAT, I HOPE WILL WILL KEEP IN MIND THAT WITHDRAWAL WILL REPRESENT FIRST INSTANCE OF A BREAK IN OUR POLICY OF STEADINESS TOWARD ETHIOPIA TAKEN AT OUR OWN INITIATIVE. INEVITABLY, WHATEVER WE SAY TO THEM WILL CERTAINLY BE INTERPRETED AS THE FIRST STEP IN A WEAKENING OF POLITICAL SUPPORT, AS A SIGN OF DISENCHANTMENT WITH THE INCREASINGLY STRIDENT SOCIALISM OF THEIR POLICY, AND MOST PROBABLY A SIGN OF OUR DISPLEASURE AT CURRENT ANTI-CIA CAMPAIGN. SECURITY CONSIDERATIONS WILL NOT HOLD UP (OTHERS ARE STILL HERE), JOB DISSATISFACTION PROBABLY WON'T EITHER, ALTHOUGH WE COULD MAKE A SOMEWHAT BETTER CASE FOR IT, AND ANY REFERENCE TO PRESENT POLITICAL SITUATION WILL SIMPLY RUFFLE THEIR FEATHERS.

4. UNFORTUNATELY, I HAVE NO BRIGHT IDEAS ABOUT WHAT WE CAN SAY TO DIVERT ETHIOPIAN SUSPICIONS OF OUR MOTIVES. PROBABLY BEST BET WOULD BE TO CITE RELATIVE INABILITY OF PEACE CORPS DIRECTOR HERE TO PLACE HIS PEOPLE IN MEANINGFUL JOBS AND HOPE WE CAN MAKE IT STAND UP. WE WILL ALSO NEED TO BE PREPARED TO DEAL WITH PRESS, AND I WOULD ASK THEREFORE THAT ANY INSTRUCTIONS I RECEIVE COVER THIS ASPECT AS WELL.

5. I WOULD HOPE AMBASSADOR-DESIGNATE GODLEY IS BEING KEPT INFORMED AND GIVEN A CHANCE TO GET INTO ACT.
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